



Tapu'itea

...ina ia manino le folauga.

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OFFICIAL AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

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Governor Togiola receives \$300,000 from DOT for Highway Safety

(UTULEI) – Governor Togiola Tulafono announced that the Territory will receive \$300,000 from the Department of Transportation (DOT) – National Traffic Safety Administration (NTSA) under the State Traffic Safety Information System Improvement Grant Program.

In announcing the award that was issued on September 13, 2006 and received this week, Governor Togiola said American Samoa's grant award is based on information that the local Office of Highway Safety submitted to Washington D.C. that demonstrated the Territory's establishment of a highway safety data and traffic records coordinating committee and development of a multi-year highway safety data and traffic records system strategic plan.

"I wish to express my sincere thanks to DOT and NTSA for this funding that certifies that our Department of Public Safety and Office of Highway Safety have implemented significant improvements to our traffic records system," said Governor Togiola. "I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the Territory's Office of Highway Safety at the Department of Public Safety and the coordinating committee for the outstanding job in preparation of our submission that has resulted in this successful application."

Governor Togiola said the funding will help American Samoa continue to implement significant improvements to its traffic records system as well as design and manage more effective strategies for reducing crashes, deaths and injuries.

"The actions that our local Office of Highway Safety have taken so that we can have better access to more reliable data in addressing serious traffic and highway safety concerns should be commended," said Governor Togiola. "I would also like to thank Commissioner Sotoa for his personal support of this most important highway safety effort."



Governor Togiola Tulafono presents the Hon. James Cunningham, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, and now U.S. Consul General in Hong Kong, a token of Samoan appreciation after their meeting on Monday (Sunday, AS) leading up to the start of the investment conference that will begin on Wednesday (Tuesday, AS).
(photo: ASG)

Governor Togiola announces \$400,000 DOI grant for LBJ Hospital

(UTULEI) – Governor Togiola Tulafono announced that the Department of the Interior (DOI) and Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) has awarded American Samoa a grant of \$400,000 that will provide critical improvements to the water supply and wastewater management at LBJ Hospital in Faga'alu.

Governor Togiola received the announcement dated September 12, 2006 this week from Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior – Office of Insular Affairs, Papali'itele David B. Cohen.

"I wish to thank the Deputy Assistant Secretary for this wonderful news for the Territory," said Governor Togiola. "When we applied in July, we outlined in our request that critical improvements to the water supply and wastewater management are needed at LBJ. With this grant, we can begin work as soon as the paperwork is completed. I greatly appreciate the continued support of DOI and OIA in Washington D.C. for our much-needed projects."



ASCC students from the Student Government Association, the Peer Mentors, the PTK Honors Society, and others took part in the You Are Not Alone (YANA) Coalition training this past weekend. YANA chairman Mark Mageo is seen at the far left. (Photo: J. Kneubuhl)

ASCC/YANA Certifies Largest Group Yet in Crisis Counseling

By James Kneubuhl, ASCC Press Officer

A group of concerned faculty, staff and students at the American Samoa Community College (ASCC) formed the You Are Not Alone (YANA) Coalition in 2003, after an unprecedented wave of teen suicides in the Territory saw more than half a dozen young people, some of them ASCC students, take their own lives. Based on the simple idea that young men and women going through difficult emotional challenges should have someone to turn to, the YANA Coalition has spent the subsequent years educating ASCC students and community members in the basic principles of crisis intervention.

This past Saturday, a group of 34 students from ASCC organizations such as the Student Government Association, the Peer Mentors, and the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society, as well as an additional four from Catholic Social Services and Leone High School, completed their training in the best known methods for counseling individuals struggling with crises such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS or thoughts of suicide. While YANA has taught these skills on previous occasions, this latest group represents the largest number of students the organization has ever trained in one session.

The training took place over two weekends, with the first session focused solely on communication skills. Led by newly appointed YANA chairman Mark Mageo, Rosevonne Pato of the Health & Human Services Division and counselor Annie Panama, the sessions employed a combination of lectures and group activities to demonstrate the best approaches to establishing effective communication with individuals going through a crisis. Topics covered during the second weekend included Problem Solving/Decision Making, Crisis Intervention, Group Issues and Networking and Resources. The 34 students will receive their certificates of completion for the YANA training during a school assembly on October 19th, which will mark the third anniversary of the establishment of YANA at ASCC.

In his role as the new chairman, Mageo explained that his goals for YANA include looking into grants that can help YANA financially. "With the right resources, we could provide more training for students as well as government agencies. We'd like to expand our budget to purchase training materials for and other necessary equipment. This would enable more outreach efforts such as brochures on our services and advertisements for our crisis line. Up to this point, we've relied primarily on fundraising to keep YANA going."

Despite limited funds, YANA has managed to keep its crisis line active, and young people who would like to talk about their problems with someone interested in helping can call 252-9262 (YANA), or send an e-mail to yana@ascc.as.

SHARE IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES

with our ASG workforce as well as the citizens of American Samoa.
Email your articles, announcements, pictures or other information to:

tapuitea@amsamoa.gov.as

Deadline for submissions is Thursday @ noon.

Contact: Harry Stevens @733-1694 or Vince Iuli @ 733-1041
or call 633-4116

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ASCC Students Take Coastal Clean-up Challenge

(Press Release) The 50 American Samoa Community College (ASCC) students who participated in the International Coastal Clean-up this past Saturday at Lions Park in Tafuna found themselves awed by the sight of "more trash than you could imagine." Much of the trash had been covered by sand blown up from the beach, or stuck in the remaining mangroves of the lagoon. "Not only was there so much trash, but the objects that you find are ridiculous. We found slippers, beer bottles, a lot of styrofoam, and even kitchen appliances," commented Jennifer Mauigoa, Once Were Warriors club member.

The ASCC group consisted of members from the Strategies for Ecology Education, Development and Sustainability (SEEDS) environmental club, the Once Were Warriors student club, and students from the marine science program. The group planned on a full beach clean-up, but participants never made it past a half-mile from the start area. There was that much trash. Alvin Lin, a Marine science student, was so impressed with the amount of plastic, glass, and Styrofoam that had drifted onto the beach that he decided to weigh the amount of debris that were picked up. It came to over 1000 pounds.

"I know that some of it, like the buoys, might have broken off their ropes and floated ashore," Jessica Tauiautusa, a SEEDS club member, wrote in a reflection about the clean-up. "But the juice, milk, and other containers must have been tossed into the ocean by uncaring people. Some of the trash we found should have been recycled, and other items such as the oil containers and kitchen appliances should have been properly disposed of."

If people shared the shock of Tauiautusa and Mauigoa, our community would be on the way to cleaner beaches and a less blighted island. The student participants received a firsthand lesson in how trash can circulate for hundreds and even thousands of miles to a final resting place that, in our case, took up an entire afternoon to only partially clean. Many people have the misconception that most of the trash comes from careless boaters and fishermen, but debris from marine vessels actually accounts for only 20 percent. According to last year's report by the US Commission on Ocean Policy, 80 percent of marine debris actually begins as land trash, a lot of it carelessly thrown on to sidewalks and streets, bag by bag, plastic bottle by plastic bottle, then eventually washed into waterways by rain.

A glimpse of how much trash human beings throw into the ocean comes every fall in the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Clean-up Day. Last year, a half-million volunteers picked up 8 million pounds of debris from American coastlines, enough to circle the Earth seven times. In the late 1990s, marine researcher Charles Moore discovered a spot in the North Western Hawaiian Islands where the currents and winds draw plastic debris into concentrations of a million pieces per square mile. *(cont'd. on page 4)*

ASCC to Join Islands of Opportunity Alliance Led by UH Hilo

(Press Release) The American Samoa Community College is proud to announce it is a member of the newly funded Islands of Opportunity Alliance, as part of the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program of the National Science Foundation (NSF). Seventeen institutions throughout Hawaii and the Pacific will work collaboratively to increase the overall number of underrepresented students receiving bachelor degrees in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Launched in 1991, the main goal of LSAMP is to encourage and facilitate access to careers in STEM fields for underrepresented populations. More specifically, NSF hopes to encourage these students to enroll in and complete baccalaureate programs in STEM fields, as well as to continue on to graduate studies in these fields. The LSAMP Program began with grants to six multi-institution collaborative efforts, called Alliances. Today, there are 34 Alliances with more than 450 participating institutions throughout the country, with the Islands of Opportunity Alliance being the newest addition. The other Islands of Opportunity member institutions are: UH Hilo, UH Manoa, Chaminade University, the University of Guam, Hawai'i Pacific University, the community colleges of the UH system (Hawai'i, Honolulu, Kapiolani, Kauai, Leeward, Maui, and Windward), Guam Community College, College of the Marshall Islands, Northern Marianas College, and Palau Community College.

The member institutions will work individually and collectively towards four main objectives: 1) To create, maintain, and/or expand alliance partnership activities designed to recruit well-qualified, under-represented community college students into STEM baccalaureate degree programs within the Islands of Opportunity Alliance universities. 2) Provide internship and research experiences for those pursuing baccalaureate degrees in STEM disciplines. 3) Promote retention and progression rates amongst scholars by creating a scholarly learning community in which academic excellence is encouraged and supported through appropriate advising, mentoring, and academic support programs. 4) Improve instruction in STEM courses, particularly the gateway science and mathematics courses, through faculty development of high context teaching approaches.

The Islands of Opportunity Alliance plans to build upon the successes of past and current LSAMP Programs throughout the country, utilizing practices that have been shown to best accomplish the primary goal of increasing graduation rates of underrepresented students in STEM fields, such as tutoring, research experiences, advising centers, and bridge programs. The Alliance has adapted these best practices to the unique cultural and geographic setting of the Pacific region, utilizing the extensive scholarship on cross-cultural communication and on learning styles of islander peoples, and administrative structures that have succeeded in spanning the vast distances between islands.

(continued on page 4)

Governor's Message for White Sunday 2006

"Our Children: A Great and Wonderful Investment"

"White Sunday provides us with an opportunity to celebrate our children. And every year, it is a reminder for all of us to cherish and value every child in our lives. Our commitment to our children is a loving partnership between all of us parents, grandparents, the school, the church, the village, and our island community as a whole.

Let us be reminded in this year's White Sunday celebration, that human dignity and mutual respect are part of our children's development and it must begin with every adult they encounter daily and it must be reflected in our homes, schools, church and government.

Let's promote the development of healthy attitudes and feelings to our children. It will encourage each one of them to become an individual while trying to achieve satisfying relationships with others. The bonds that we create each day are vital to the success of our children because we believe each child deserves an opportunity for total development in American Samoa. Let's expand and reinforce the strengths of our children. And that starts in our respective homes.

As we continue to try to meet the diverse needs of our children in ensuring that providing the best education is still our main priority, let us be proud that what we do for our children is a great and wonderful investment. They are the greatest source of promise for American Samoa.

Our island home today will be under the stewardship of our children tomorrow. Let's embrace our investment. Let's embrace and celebrate our children.

On behalf of my wife --Mary, Lt. Governor Ipulasi, Mrs. Elisapeta Sunia, and all of our children and grandchildren, we wish all the children of American Samoa a very happy, blessed and safe White Sunday.

And a special White Sunday greeting to all the children of our brave men and women in uniform whose parents are unable to be on island for this very special celebration because they are protecting our freedom. God bless and keep them always in His loving care.

Ia manuia le Lotu a Tamaiti,



(from page 3) **Coastal Clean-up Challenge**

The ASCC participants did not have to see a million parts per square mile to be appalled. "What gives people the right to throw their stuff on the ground?" asked Hua-Ming Wei, a Marine Science major, "Do they not care, or do they expect people like us to sacrifice our time to pick it up and throw it away for them?" Organizer Karolyn Braun remarked, "When one thinks of a day at the park, they think of fun in the sun, clean beaches and seasonal breezes. However, instead of playing in the waves, we were dodging containers of used washing liquid, scrap metals and old fish netting. In a place that is supposed to smell of salt water, all we could smell was the decomposing trash." Braun added, "Because countless others have not taken the time to do the little things, like throwing a bottle in a rubbish container, they've built up the trash to a point where a beautiful natural beach looks more like a city street on trash day."

The ASCC participants hope that everyone on Tutuila will do the little things so the next time anyone goes to one of our beach parks, they can actually enjoy it.

Islands of Opportunity Alliance *(continued from page 3)*

The Alliance is administratively centered at the University of Hawaii at Hilo, and its key leadership will be UH-Hilo's Chancellor Dr. Rose Tseng as Principal Investigator (PI), Dr. Dan Brown (UH Hilo) as Program Director, and Carmen Perez-Frayne (UH-Hilo) as Program Manager.

"The idea behind creating the new Alliance is to continue building bridges and collaborations between schools from the Pacific and Hawaii, for the benefit of our students," said UH Hilo Education Program Coordinator Carmen Perez-Frayne.

"The Alliance budget is not extremely large, and therefore we will depend on partnership and collaborative efforts to make the 'dollar' go further. The idea is the funding will be used to enhance and/or expand existing efforts, bridge similar efforts across campuses, and share best practices all to build a stronger 'pipeline' from the community colleges to the four-year institutions. Funding will be allocated through a proposal process. The Governing Board will host a request for proposals from any of the schools within the alliance. This process is still being finalized, but once things are done, each school's Campus Coordinator (a designee for the Alliance) will be notified."